

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER

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ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

30 November 2018

Agenda Item 9.1

CAMPUS CO-ORDINATING GROUPS -
ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE COMBINED STUDIES PROGRAMME 2017/18
COLERAINE, JORDANSTOWN AND MAGEE.

COVER SHEET

Action is required of the Committee as indicated below.

To receive the reports.

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**CAMPUS CO-ORDINATING GROUPS -
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Introduction

This composite report is based on the reports from Coleraine, Jordanstown and Magee campuses and takes the format followed in previous reports. Overall the modularised provision, procedures and processes are well settled and provide for a considerable body of students. In going forward, each campus is working through its own particular issues and challenges. Combined programmes, under modular provision, have proven the robustness of the regulations in managing, processing and taking students through to awards.

Enrolments

Coleraine: In 2017/18, 448 students were enrolled on 52 combined programmes. While, the number of combining courses has fallen over recent years due to course rationalisations and relocations (such as business, computing and languages) combination programmes continue to be marketable at Coleraine. Arts related combinations account for the majority of students, closely followed by combinations within the Ulster University Business School.

Jordanstown: In 2017/18 the total number of students enrolled at Jordanstown for combined programmes was 424 with a further 32 part time students across 15 subject combinations. Sociology with Criminology continues to be the most popular combination, followed by “Business Economics with” combinations.

Magee: In 2017/18, 267 students had enrolled on combined modular courses. This continues the decreasing trend which is a direct consequence of the closure of subject areas on the Magee campus. 33 combined programmes, overseen by the Magee Campus Coordinating Group, had registered students in 2017/18, including 3 that are part-time. The most popular combinations were with Social Science.

Subject Combinations

Following recent substantial combination changes, this year was reasonably settled with no additional combination changes other than the withdrawal of Media as a combining subject. This was the last year of Business combinations at Coleraine.

Exit Awards

The traditionally small uptake of exit awards continued.

Chief External Examiner's Reports

Coleraine: Professor Jeremy Smith from University of Glasgow highly commended the robust and rigorous attention to detail and concern for student development displayed by academic and support staff alike. He drew the CPAB's attention to two considerations of examining and awards. Some courses appeared to award a higher proportion of 1st class awards than others. His second point to reflect upon was to consider when more factual based subjects (which utilise the full range of marks) are paired with a subject more discursive (where traditionally marks are capped in the high 70s). In a system where averaging of percentages is used to determine degree-classification, a very high mark can skew an overall result.

Jordanstown: Professor Stephen Sinclair from Glasgow Caledonian University, appointed for the four-year period from 2017/18 was in attendance at the Progress and Award Board and commended the "efficient and professional" administration of the Board, noting that the Board maintains and enforces academic standards rigorously and that module marks and degree awards correspond to those of other UK Higher Education Institutions.

Magee: Chief External Dr Sean de Burca (UCD) attended the June 2018 Progress and Award Board, commenting very positively on the procedures and conduct of the Board.

Activities

Coleraine: The Campus Coordinating Group at Coleraine will continue to monitor the combination changes and their promotion through the Online Prospectus.

Jordanstown: The Campus Coordinating Group at Jordanstown will review the pattern of transfers from part-time to full-time study to inform University admissions practice and asking grades.

Magee: The Campus Coordinating Group will continue to deal with timetabling issues and minimise disruption to the combined offerings as subjects and courses are discontinued or moved.

All Campus Coordinating Groups would like to see the re-establishment of combined studies. Knowledge generation is often created from cross-population of ideas and learning. Many intellectual, social, and practical problems require interdisciplinary approaches. It is important as a University we continue to support interdisciplinarity.